(b) The High Court of Delhi had, in the course of hearing of a writ petition on 16th December, 2002, expressed concern at the time being taken by Working Group in the finalization of the Agenda for the National Committee on Disaster Management.

(c) The Working Group constituted for this purpose held several meetings and has now finalized the Agenda Note for consideration in the meeting of the National Committee on Disaster Management.

Suicide cases in the country

788. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that cases of suicides in our country are on the rise; if so, what are the main causes leading to this extreme step and number of. these unnatural deaths during the last two years;

(b) whether Kerala State is at the top in such cases as reported in the Financial Express dated the 17th December, 2002; and

(c) whether Government have drawn up some plans to educate the youth and create awareness among them against this menace; if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D. SWAMI): (a) As per the information compiled by National Crime Records Bureau, a total of 110587 suicides were reported in the country during the year 1999 which declined to 108593 suicides in the year 2000, thereby registering a decline of 1.8 per cent in the year 2000 over 1999. The suicidal death figures of 1999 and 2000 indicate that family problems have been the prime cause of suicide followed by major/prolonged illness.

(b) Yes, Sir. Kerala occupies the top position among the States.

(c) The Central Government are implementing a number of schemes/programmes to constructively engage the youth in activities which will promote their mental and physical well being.